



Focus on **Mid-Columbia River and Lake Roosevelt**

from Ecology's Water Quality Program, Watershed Management Section

Presentations and hearings are scheduled for:

March 10, 2004

6:30 PM

Eastern WA University
Spokane Campus
705 W. 1st Ave., corner
of 1st & Wall
RM. 432
Spokane

March 11, 2004

6:30 PM

Chelan County
Auditorium
400 Douglas, corner of
Washington & Douglas
Wenatchee

Written comments must
be received by March
18 mail to:

Ann Butler
WA Dept. of Ecology
PO Box 47600
Olympia, WA
98504-7600

or

E-mail
anbu461@ecy.wa.gov

Call for more
information or copies of
the TMDL:
(360) 407-6480

Copies of the draft
TMDL are available at:
www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/0403002/html

Public hearings planned on the Mid-Columbia River and Lake Roosevelt Total Dissolved Gas TMDL and Implementation Plan

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) invites you to provide your comments at public hearings on the proposed Mid-Columbia River and Lake Roosevelt Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and implementation plan for controlling total dissolved gas (TDG). Before the start of the formal public hearing, there will be a brief presentation to learn about the proposed TMDL and implementation plan, followed by a question and answer session.

Background

The Mid-Columbia River and Lake Roosevelt Total Dissolved Gas TMDL is based on the federal Clean Water Act, state and tribal water quality standards, the National Marine Fisheries Service's 2000 Biological Opinion for the Federal Columbia River Power System, and continuous monitoring and special studies conducted by hydroelectric project owners on the River.

The TMDL/implementation plan identifies strategies for reducing total dissolved gas in the Mid-Columbia/Lake Roosevelt from the Canadian border to the Snake River. For this project, Ecology and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will issue a joint TMDL, sharing responsibility depending on jurisdiction. EPA will lead the TMDL for Lake Roosevelt and tribal waters in the Columbia River. Ecology will be lead for the state waters of the Columbia downstream of Grand Coulee Dam.

EPA works closely with Ecology and provides technical review of all products produced by Ecology. Ecology worked with the Spokane Tribe to develop the implementation plan to reduce TDG in the Columbia River and Lake Roosevelt.

Why is elevated total dissolved gas (TDG) a problem?

Saturation of the water with dissolved gases may result from either natural or human caused conditions. High concentrations of TDG negatively impact the health and survival of fish and other aquatic life. The primary source of elevated dissolved gas in the Mid-Columbia/Lake Roosevelt is from water spilled at seven dams – Priest Rapids, Wanapum, Rock Island, Rocky Reach, Wells, Chief Joseph, and Grand Coulee – and from sources in Canada and the United States upstream of Lake Roosevelt.

Spill results from river flows exceeding the available capacity of the dam's powerhouse. Water is also spilled to assist fish passage. The Mid-Columbia River's salmonid populations have declined significantly and inadequate fish passage has been identified as one of the causes. The habitat – the lakes and rivers where fish live – also needs to be healthy for the fish populations to recover. This TMDL attempts to balance fish passage needs with the TDG levels necessary to protect habitat.



Federal law requires cleanup of polluted waters

Federal law requires states to identify sources of pollution in water bodies that fall short of water quality standards and to determine how much pollution needs to be reduced for the water to remain healthy. Given this information, Ecology, EPA, the Spokane Tribe, and regional interests develop strategies for achieving the necessary reduction or elimination of pollution. The result is a water cleanup plan or Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), which identifies the allowable pollution levels from various sources. In the Mid-Columbia/ Lake Roosevelt, TDG levels at times violate the standards of the Colville and Spokane Tribes, and the state of Washington. This TMDL provides target levels and an implementation plan to reduce TDG to acceptable levels.

Public Comment Period:

Ecology, EPA, and the Spokane Tribe will review and consider all relevant comments received during the public comment period. Following this review, the TMDL and implementation plan may be modified. When complete, the TMDL will be sent to EPA for final approval. You will be notified of the final decision if you present either oral or written comments during the comment period. If you do not comment but wish to receive notification of Ecology's final decision, please call or write Ann Butler at the address on the front of this mailing.

The public comment period on the plan goes until March 18, 2004. Written comments on the proposed Total Maximum Daily Load and/or Implementation Plan must be received by **5 p.m. on March 18, 2004.**

The TMDL/Implementation Plan is available for examination and copying at Ecology's headquarters at 300 Desmond Dr. SE, Lacey, WA 98503. Documents are also available on Ecology's Web site at: www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/0403002/html

If you have special accommodation needs or require this publication in an alternate format, please contact us at (360) 407-6404 (Voice) or for the speech or hearing impaired (TTY) at 711 or 1-800-833-6388.